# Activities Forum [2]

## Minutes

13th November Meeting, 6-8pm, held in Meeting Room 3, Beit Building, South Kensington

**Attendance**

| Name | Initials | Position |
|---|---|---|
| Tom Gordon | TG | Deputy President (Activities) |
| Rob Fenner | RF | ICU Activities Manager (Operations) |
| Lucy Brown | LB | ICU Activities Manager |
| Aisha Qadi | AQ | Representation & Democracy Assistant |
| Nico Henry | NH | President |
| Emina Hogas | E.H | Deputy President (Education) |
| Robin Flower | R.F | A&E Treasurer |
| Nathalie Tedfors Lindell | NTL | A&E Chair |
| Pip Moss | PM | A&E Vice Chair (Media)<br>Sports Vice Chair (Team Court) |
| Jack Swires | JS | RCSU President |
| Ben Bishop | BB | A&E Vice Chair (Music instrumental) |
| Logan Brooks | LB | RCSU Treasurer |
| Sean Brunswick | SB | Recreation Treasurer |
| Imogen Young | IY | Recreation Vice Chair (Games and Hobbies) |
| Ewan Badcoe | EB | Recreation Vice Chair (Exploration) |
| Thurston Blount | TB | Recreation Chair |
| Harry Su | HS | Recreation Vice Chair (appreciation) |
| River Pang | RP | Recreation Secretary |
| Immy Kennard | IK | RSM VP (C&S) |
| Emma Halford | EH | Sports Vice Chair (Martial Arts) |
| Tom Edwards | TE | Sports Treasurer |
| Yirui Xu | YX | CGCU C&S Societies Officer |
| Aidan Madge | AM | CGCU C&S Chair |
| Rosanne Choong | RC | Sports Secretary |
| Junior Mbah | JM | Sports Vice Chair (individual sports) |
| Guillaume Felix | GF | Felix Editor in Chief |
| Kalista Lam | KL | ICSMSU C&S Vice Chair (Sports & Arts) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Yongmin Ju | YJ | ICSMSU Management Group Treasurer |
| Yousuf Yaqub | YY | ICSMSU C&S Vice Chair (Volunteering & Academics) |
| Sarah Azam | SA | ICSMSU President |
| Stephania Medvetskaia | SM | Sports Chair (attending online) |
| Bertran Maurelia Peidro | BP | |
| Jorge Sobrino Fernandez-Miranda | J.M | |
| Rebecca Hughes | RH | |
| Steffan Hughes | SH | |
| Alanna Senior | AS | |

**Apologies**

No apologies noted

1. **Welcome**

TG has welcomed members to the meeting.

2. **Apologies**

No apologies noted

3. **Minutes of the previous meeting/actions arising / confidential items**
    a. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

All members approved of minutes of the previous meetings

    b. **Confidential items**

One confidential motion is being discussed today. TG will follow the procedures as last time by not publishing the minutes of the confidential item except for the final results.

    c. **Actions arising**

No actions arising

4. **Reports/updates**
    a. **Chairs report**

TG reports the following updates:

- Standing orders are now confirmed, one meeting per term and on a monthly basis

- Powers: Allocating funding to C&S's and MG CUs. They have the power to delegate to subcommittees

- NAC applications are currently open and will close on November 30th.

- ADF funding closes tomorrow. TG reminded any members to put through any last-minute funding applications if required, as the committee meeting will happen next week

- Trips funding closes tomorrow as well, with the committee meeting happening next week

- Harlington closes next Friday with the committee meeting on 5th of December

- Student Experience Fund (SEF) update: Launched on October 23rd, 2 weeks later than last year. There were delays confirming funding, but this has been sorted now. Compared to last year, in the first 17 days, 9.4% has been spent, and 20.4% of students have spent their money.

- Working on the alumni proposal project, which is a joint officer trustee goal

- Processes: Working with Annie, RF and LB to work on the customer experience charter and service commitment, which describes what a good service looks like and how they plan to meet them

- Note on sponsorships: There is a bit backlog, but the team are working on it and should be resolved this week

- Committee member of the month shoutout: A new scheme awarded to committee members each month where members can nominate anyone. This month's shoutout goes to Alina from the dodgeball committee for hosting a female-only dodgeball event and Aisling from DoCSoc, who took on more responsibilities that were out of their remit, such as ordering merch, etc.

- Still struggling with ad hoc bits, such as catching up on emails

- Has been on the hiring panel for a new SU position - marketing and comms positions. There were 162 applications 6 days of interviews.

- Wants to adjust the split to dedicate time for students and doing projects. If members want any meetings with TG, encourages to get in touch

AM was curious about why there were 2 winners this month. TG mentioned that there's usually 1 winner, but due to many applications (16 nominees), it was hard to choose. Many people deserved it, but the application did not link to values well.

AM asked whether there were guidelines for values and criteria, as it would be useful to have a support document explaining what these mean and how to complete the form. For some societies, it's hard to know where the values align

RF mentioned that the criteria are kept off the form to make it as user-friendly as possible.

AM asked about the reasoning of the values, to which RF said strategic decisions

AM mentioned that it is quite confusing to try to take on specific actions. RF encourages to look at the resources available, as there's some examples and guidance but is open to feedback

LB added that it is important that everything links to the union strategy. There's a strategy document that outlines that too, which might be worth adding the strategy document to the guidelines as a signpost

AM would appreciate a link to the Freshdesk article in the form

TG is now on the Great Hall Project Board, might reach out to others for their expertise

AM asks for the current ETA on the Great Hall to which NH says new academic year

LB mentioned that September 2026 is the plan. That is the current goal however LB makes members aware that with the scale of work, and that there might be delays.

**b. Activities team updates**

RF reports the following updates:

- Thanked everyone who participated in nominating the committee member of the month. Did not expect so many applications however it is a good sign in the right direction. This is the initial start on rewards and recognition, and hopes to find more initiatives in the future

- Drop-ins have started. A couple of changes to way the team are doing it this year such as change of location and ways of dealing with queries through escalation processes and closing the feedback loop.

- Building management since last forum - completed a lot of building works, cleared storage area, major works to the snooker room, looking at security of the building and is in talks to go through some tangible actions

- MR4 is next door and is a big concern due to storage issues

- Refunds, room bookings and email management is working good. Working on the 5-day working day timeline, with financial documents being 10 working days

- Falling back on sponsorships, but is actioning it this week

- Events coming up: Winter Committee Mixer, part of recognition to help C&Ss get some networking, freebies and games on Tuesday, the 9th of December. Movember events are also happening this month in collaboration with RAG. If any sports or societies are doing Movember stuff, please reach out to RAG if interested.

- Expanding reach launched — funded the postgraduate park run, women chase the moon, and Arabian nights showcase. Sending out new resource tomorrow and did focus groups which will help break down research

- Funding deadlines: Tomorrow is the deadline for ADF and trips, not a huge amount, so encourages group to put through some applications

LB reports the following updates:

- Announced deadlines for January events, including any paid college space. Encourages members to get events in by the deadlines

- Launched event development sessions - members can book session with event specific coordinator. Similar to drop ins.

- All events will be processed in less than 10 working days. This wasn't the case last year so it has been a significant improvement

- There are 105 unresolved activity proposals, only 2 are overdue but still within 10 days

- Activity proposals: reminds groups to action feedback, as sometimes risk assessments are not where they need to be

LB is looking to book in the welcome back fair in February. Similar to last year, slightly smaller scale, with every MG and CU a stall to promote their groups within their areas.

LB gave 2 options of dates and asks a show of hands from the room. Between 3rd February or 12th February 10-4 pm in QTR. The majority of members in the room voted for 12th February.

TE asks an update on timeline of resolving tickets. LB replied that resolving tickets is within 1-2 working days, but can take longer for more complex tickets. On the whole the team are trying to clear tickets within 5 working days. If any tickets such as sponsorships and finance are flagged, they can look into how long it takes.

SM mentioned that with the expanding reach fund, some have said deadlines are not clear. Asks if it is possible to have that released or is it rolling basis

RF agreed that is has not been communicated. There is no deadline for it, as the team are reviewing applications every 5-10 working days so that people can continuously submit applications. Says to submit whenever. Any submitted in Christmas will be resolved in January upon return.

AM asked about the statistics for how many rounds it takes for proposals to respond. Reports on feedback from societies that they were not sure about what an appropriate control is, due to no guidance. Curious if that is intentional or not.

LB said that about 30-40% get approved from when they come in. On the whole, as long as feedback gets actioned, it gets approved. However, it tends to be the same groups not acting on feedback at all and are often sending the same assessments or do not understand what they have to do. This results in an email to arrange a meeting for support but that means it takes longer. The best things to mention to groups is follow the article step by step and make sure feedback is actioned

AM asked what the process for adding redundancies is, as it takes 3-4 weeks. RF is looking to automate parts of the process and determine how much time is needed for sponsorship processes. The plan is to resolve sponsorships tomorrow but also find a better way to control backlogs.

**c. MG/CU updates**

Arts and Entertainments:

NTL reported the following updates:

- Storage has been causing issues. It is now being handled, but initial situation of students not being able to access has been a struggle. Appreciates it is being worked on now.

- Event budgeting is a huge challenge, as plenty of societies have complained about event budgets being rejected due to reasons that are not relevant to the event budget

- Events are being arbitrary rejected based on whether they're making too big of a profit or loss. It is frustrating being told a hard no and having to keep changing it until they get to a number that's approved. This is an issue as students are told to be accurate with numbers. NTL understands these events may have a loss but mentions that societies have been running these events for a while, and arbitrary reasons are not enough.

RCSU

JS reported the following updates:

- Not much to update on as everything is going well

- Planning events in second term having completed the 1st term successful events

Medics:

YJ reported the following updates:

- Pretty busy month

- Social societies are planning tours and conference events

- Big events happening in December

CGCU:

AM reported the following updates:

- Recently adopted societies are doing very well and are looking to expand it due to consistent good attendance at events

- Department societies are getting frustrated by financial rules. Some don't run that many spending events, but when they do, it usually requires very heavy spending, which results in a similar situation NTL mentioned of the application being rejected.

- Events don't get approved until sponsorship is approved, even if the application says that the event has a backup with other funding sources.

DZ reported the following updates:

- Welcomedinner last month
- Big things ahead planned
- Not much updates as of now

Rec:

TB reported the following updates:

- Generally as a whole, things have been going well

- Storage issues have been quite common this time. There was a recent UDH storage issue. The main issue was that storage was quite messy, and when it was closed, no one was told it would be closed

IY understands the closure happened last min but societies could not run core activities on that day or couple of days. Perhaps notice can be given in advance for members to know not to come for activities they can't run

LB mentioned that RF oversees operations, which includes storage. On the days RF is off, the commercial team is told that the storage would be closed, which went only to RF. When it was closed and upon opening the storage, the team realised it was very unsafe, therefore it had to be closed for the day.

From feedback, any communications about storage, such as times when anyone is off sick, will go to both RF and LB so that both are informed. This situation shouldn't have happened and hopefully won't happen again.

TB also reported that the storage in general should be improved, as well as the mini bus issues. One of the clubs did break a window and that got towed. Another bus had an engine problem.

RF mentioned that the CXP window is fixed and has now gone to the garage

JS mentioned that DXP was looked at by the RSC and CTO has been in the garage.

RSM

AP reports the following updates:

- RSM is in the admin phase and preparing for next term
- Welfare events have been successful such as the halloween event
- Preparing grants for funds
- The deadlines for approving budets is still an issue. Would like the timeline to be faster. AP has mentioned it briefly to TG as, due to scale of events, 10 working days is a long time to approve budgets
- A geology trip was meant to happen in November but has been rescheduled to January due to issues in finances

Sports:

SM reported the following updates:

- First ACC held at the end of October; good feedback and strong engagement.

- Planning for the next ACC: tickets will be released Monday and Wednesday at noon; students are advised to be on Dice around 10 minutes before release.

- Theme is "British Icons"; Sports are trialling a competition to let students vote for themes (worked well previously, with free ACC tickets as an incentive).

- Previous issue: tickets selling out too quickly. To address this, 100 tickets will be allocated for Social Secretaries (and other roles) to ensure attendance/representation at the event. A larger second release is planned.

- "Night of the Darts" on 3 December (Christmas theme).

- Ongoing conversations with relevant teams to ensure events are advertised appropriately; SM noted the relationship with societies has been positive this year.

- Currently working on Fight Night and Varsity; Sports are looking for performers. Any societies interested in performing should contact Sports.

- CSP meeting held Tuesday; SM will share minutes with TG once finalised, highlighting key points raised.

- Sports are exploring how to use sports sector funds.

- ACC is currently generating profit; Sports are considering splitting profit with events and reinvesting into sports societies, especially given sports accessibility and cost of living. Ideas raised included:

    - Subsidising instructor training

    - Subsidising travel

    - Beginner lessons (often expensive)

    - Using funds to benefit the whole club rather than distributing individually

- CSP feedback (as raised by Sports):

    - Issues with coach register forms have been resolved.

    - Finance approval delays were largely due to Victoria being on leave.

    - Event proposals have generally been approved on time (and earlier than last year). Societies have been broadly happy with this as an MG.

    - Transport costs remain a challenge; societies report that away matches are expensive.

    - Minibus booking is difficult due to limited eligible drivers. A suggestion was raised to explore joint away matches (to be discussed separately).

    - Sponsorship approval times: some societies were told a 10-day timeline, but this was not met, resulting in lost sponsors despite significant effort to secure them.

    - A suggestion was raised to consider flexibility for annual bookings after Freshers' Fortnight (noting this may be operationally time-consuming).

    - Additional concerns included:

    - Judo experiencing communication issues; they need storage and were refused without a reason given.

- Some societies would like a way to track helpdesk queries/requests, as they do not always feel heard.

- Parkour raised issues around equipment storage and Union gym access; they identified mats in storage they could not access.

## 5. RSS motion of no confidence reflection

TG provided a reflection on the recent motion of no confidence process. TG reminded members that Legal had proposed procedures and guidance which may be helpful to follow for future motions of no confidence.

TG noted that, by default, motions of no confidence may raise questions about:

- Whether the motion should be considered at Activities Forum by default.

- How the process should work where there is no relevant Management Group.

- TG asked members for thoughts or suggested modifications.

NTL said the process looked good overall but noted that the draft email to the defendant may appear too emotional in its opening sentence.

NTL suggested it may be worth including warnings for misbehaviour, clarifying that the Chair has the right to ask individuals to leave the meeting if needed. NTL noted the previous process was not enjoyable for anyone.

NTL also suggested a broader discussion may be needed about whether this will become a recurring issue within cultural societies and whether any guidelines can help.

TG noted there are internal discussions, but this may be more of a trustee-level issue.

NH noted that individuals can only be removed a finite number of times.

SB noted that in the last process, only two members left, meaning the meeting could not progress.

TG clarified that a third committee member was elected in Autumn elections. TG noted that Sacha (who defended Alice previously) is now Treasurer, and the committee has the option to co-opt.

LB asked about the practice of the defendant and author asking each other questions directly, noting it did not feel productive, and asked for views.

TG stated that the last process became messy due to the confrontational nature of questions; TG does not want to rule it out entirely but is considering safeguards.

AM suggested a more parliamentary style could help speaking through the Chair and requiring verbal/express approval before questions are asked. AM suggested this could help keep questions appropriate and constructive.

NTL agreed that it does not make sense to completely rule out direct questioning, but it should be at the discretion of the Chair, particularly where tensions are high.

**6. <u>Merger of Spanish Society and Latin American Society</u>**

J.M (Spanish Society President) and BP proposed merging Spanish Society with the (currently inactive) Latin American Society. Key points raised:

- Latin American Society has been inactive for over a year.
- There is significant cultural overlap.
- Latin American students have requested more support and community, and Spanish Society wants to support this.

NH shared that he is Latino (half English, half Argentinian) and noted that many Latin American students are in the UK for one year or on scholarships with high turnover, making sustained community difficult. NH noted that many Latin American students already engage with Spanish Society, so the merger would make sense.

LB asked about remaining funds and whether there are limitations on transfers, particularly if any funds came from sponsors.

TG confirmed there are no sponsor restrictions involved. TG noted the society is old and does not appear clearly on transaction pages, but TG had been informed that approximately £2,000 was designated to Latin American Society and asked for clarity on whether this can be reset.

Three resolutions were proposed:

- Declare the Latin American Society as inactive.

- Rename Spanish Society to reflect both communities (e.g., Spanish & Latin American Society).

- Transfer remaining funds to the renamed society.

Members were supportive and the decision was agreed.

## 7. Alumni Engagement at the Union

TG introduced an alumni engagement project, noting it is linked to a broader manifesto/background goal to build a CSP alumni network and is now a shared officer/trustee project.

TG noted that what is currently shared with alumni is outdated. Current provision includes:

- Lifetime membership (£40), with £30 allocated to a C&S of their choice.

- Access to bars, clubs and societies, and library access (described as a blank white card with no name).

- Global hubs having alumni networks.

- Awards, graduation pin badges.

- Careers Service.

- Alumni visitor centre (temporarily closed).

PM commented that some of this provision has not been happening in practice.

TG explained that the project is a mix of what the Union can offer and what the University can offer. TG noted other groups also provide alumni engagement (e.g., Constituent Unions and Imperial Advancement).

TG reported that there are around 7,300 lifetime members, but only ~6% have up-to-date contact details. TG referenced a questionnaire run by a final-year student exploring barriers, including:

Alumni not feeling particularly connected with Imperial.

Dissatisfaction with benefits.

JS noted the questionnaire received around 20 alumni responses, which is disproportionate given the overall alumni base. TG agreed and was unsure why response numbers were low.

Potential benefits to C&Ss (as discussed):

- Donations/grants/sponsorships
- Career talks
- Coaching
- Logistics support
- Ticket sales support

Potential benefits to ICU (as discussed):

- Supports communication and community activity
- Increased influence with the University
- External advocacy
- Trustee pipeline
- Support for operational areas (e.g., "tanker management" referenced in discussion)

TG asked where the Union wants to go next, noting a desire to design a process where students want to stay connected to Imperial from the start (i.e., build belonging earlier). TG suggested options such as tiered alumni pricing and different access levels to spaces.

Stakeholders to consult (as discussed):

- ICU teams
- Alumni
- Student groups

TG asked who, from a CSP point of view, should be included.

JS suggested engaging Constituent Associations and noted that some departmental societies already have sponsor/alumni-style links (AM cited DocSoc example where sponsors support committee roles, which could be used to build alumni contacts).

JS suggested that offering free drinks can be an effective way to bring alumni back. LB challenged whether that attracts the "right" alumni community. RF noted that this highlights the underlying issue: sponsorship sometimes becomes focused on funding bar nights and alcohol.

AM noted that alumni engagement does not have to be committee-focused and not all spend is alcohol-related.

SM shared that, from experience, career panels can be successful, and alumni are often willing to engage; SM noted the RCSA were willing to host and provide alumni contacts. SM added that many sports societies have strong alumni links, though it varies significantly.

NH noted that, as an alum, the only contact he receives from the University is fundraising emails; the Union could contrast this by sending newsletters and community updates (without asking for money) to build connection.

GF commented that the lifetime membership pricing seems low (e.g., library access alone may be worth more), suggesting pricing could be reconsidered. TG agreed it is "quite cheap" and noted it is odd there is no annual fee option.

AM cautioned that introducing annual fees could lead to losing many members.

JS noted that since around £30 already goes to societies, alumni could just donate directly (and the remaining £10 bar access is not a strong selling point).

PM raised practical improvements: making it easier for alumni to access membership without going through helpdesk collection. PM also noted frustrations such as security not recognising membership cards and "small logistical things" that undermine the experience.

TG asked whether CSPs have niche alumni groups attached to them.

JS noted some motor clubs can get 40+ people to attend early morning events.

AM mentioned some societies (e.g., shooting/pistol) maintain ongoing membership partly due to low cost, resulting in continued alumni involvement.

Risks of lifetime membership (as discussed):

RF asked whether there are risks with lifetime members.

PM noted attitudes have changed; alumni sometimes make difficult comments about current committees, and there is limited guidance on how to communicate with or manage negative behaviour. PM also referenced that because membership is lifetime, some alumni feel there is "nothing that can be done."

AM echoed the concern: some alumni can be demoralising by constantly commenting on current committees; this may create a power imbalance.

RF acknowledged this is important and potentially taboo, noting lifetime membership is a very long time.

JS asked whether Union complaints can be raised against lifetime members. TG confirmed yes but noted this may not be obvious or clear to societies.

LB noted that societies may worry about raising complaints where an alum is also a recurring funder, and there may be perceived implications.

AM added that some clubs depend on alumni support for delivery of activities, and it is possible those alumni may not always be easy to work with; clubs may not know how to manage this.

TG noted it is likely a minority and most alumni may be helpful.

LB noted that even if a minority, they can be the loudest.

PM suggested that if the alumni network is bigger and clearer, individual difficult instances may be less impactful. PM also suggested that making it explicit that lifetime members must adhere to Union conduct could reduce issues over time, and that expanding/improving alumni engagement may minimise the problem.

8. **CONFIDENTIAL: Motion of no confidence in Welsh Society Committee Members**

TG reminded members that one confidential motion would be discussed in line with the agreed confidential-item procedure. Minutes would be taken but remain confidential. Only the final result would be published on the website; no detail of the discussion would be included.

Proposers have 5 mins to present, and dont have to use up all the time. Members have the chance to ask questions to the proposers and defenders, after which they are asked to leave and a vote will take place.

Minutes will be taken but remain confidential. The motion will be presented in website alongside results, however no information about what has been discussed will be published.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

RESULTS:

A unanimous vote in favour of all 3 of three members being removed from the committee. No abstains

## 9. Activities Forum Standing Orders

Standing orders are to note. There were no objections to any of the items

IY asks whether the new activities committee date is confirmed for the 3rd

TG mentioned that they agreed on preliminary dates but it has not been confirmed. Will look into modifying that.

## 10. AOB

PM emailed Patrice about ADF and wants to find who they can email instead

LB said its best to email RF and LB as Patrice is no longer working at the union.

**END OF MEETING**